

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated April 26, 2005. In view of the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 10-22 are under consideration in this application.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 10-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by US Pub. No. 2002/0150311 of Lynn (hereinafter "Lynn"). The prior art references Dewar (US Pub. No. 2003/0196167), Negishi et al. (5,671,067), and Irons et al. (6,427,032) were cited as being pertinent to the present application. This rejection has been carefully considered, but is most respectfully traversed.

The document processing system of the invention, as now recited in claim 10, comprises: an input unit for reading a storing means (e.g., text, an one-dimensional, 2D or 3D bar code, a magnetic tape, an IC chip; and an encoded print into a logo mark, photograph or some other graphic item, such as a watermark, photograph, holographic, p. 9, lines 1-9) on a *hardcopy document* (e.g., a bill or a commercial paper, p. 8, lines 1-2; p. 10, line 18; Figs. 2 & 9); document processing information, which includes a form or format information of the hardcopy document or at least one hardcopy document handling procedure to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, extracting unit for extracting encoded ("encoded document processing information is read and decoded to obtain the document processing information" p. 12, lines 14-15) document processing information stored in the storing means; and document processor for executing document processing said at least one document handling procedure. The hardcopy document handling procedure (Fig. 10; pp. 16-17) includes identifying document and identifying document "format" (i.e., the layout information: rule mark positions, frame position, frame attributes (box for sum, box for date, etc.), and character types in frame (numerals, Chinese characters, Japanese phonetic letters, etc.) p. 2, lines 2-7).

The document processing information “*on document forms or formats* (p. 3, line 15)” including “*the document form, the processing procedure, the processing method and the format of the document 201 are encoded into the two-dimensional bar code 202 and stated in a prescribed position, such as a corner of the document. In particular, the document handling procedure may be a document cutting step in conjunction with a document cutting position, a seal stamping step in conjunction with a seal stamping position, a document identification step in conjunction with a document ID, a document format identification step in conjunction with a document format ID, an encryption step in conjunction with a encryption key, or a decryption step in conjunction with a decryption key* (p. 8, last paragraph).”

The invention is also directed to a document generating software product, as now recited in claim 20, comprising: a communication module for enabling a prospective document user wishing to have a hardcopy document made to notify a document generator of requirements regarding a desired hardcopy document layout and a desired hardcopy document handling procedure; a document layout making module for making a document layout according to the requirements from said prospective document user; a document candidate presenting module for presenting to the prospective document user document candidates made by the document layout making module; a document selecting module for letting the prospective document user select a document candidate out of the document candidates presented by the document candidate presenting module; a document processing information determining module for determining document processing information including a form or format information of the selected document candidate or the desired hardcopy document handling procedure; a storing means module for selecting a storing means, encoding the document processing information, and for storing the encoded document processing information in the storing means; and a document processor for printing on or embedding the storing means on the hardcopy document, and for executing the desired hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document. The hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document “format”.

The invention is also directed to a software product for providing a hardcopy document, as recited in claim 21, comprising a module for printing on or embedding in the hardcopy document a storing means, wherein said storing means stores encoded document processing information, which includes a form or format information of the hardcopy document and at least one hardcopy document handling procedure to be

executed in connection with the hardcopy document, and the hardcopy document is subject to and readable by a document processing apparatus for executing said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document. The hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document “format”.

The invention, as recited in claim 22, is also directed to a hardcopy document having a storing means printed thereon or embedded therein that include encoded document processing information, which includes a form or format information of the hardcopy document or at least one hardcopy document handling procedure to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, and the hardcopy document is readable by a document processing apparatus for executing said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document. The hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document “format”.

An object of our claimed invention is to equip a hardcopy document with a storing means in order to facilitate the handling procedure of the hardcopy document. The handling procedure includes at least identifying document format, i.e., layout. As the document format information and processing information stored in the storing means to be transmitted with the hardcopy document (p. 3, line 11-13), just by reading the storing means, the system will know what format the document has, and therefore how to process it without accessing the image storage mechanism 130 via a communication link 120 (e.g., internet, intranet, wired or wireless) as in Lynn (Fig. 1; [0024]; [0025]).

Lynn fails to teach or suggest “identifying any document *format*.” Lynn only identifies an “image” ID of the document to retrieve the document “image” later, without identifying any format or layout of the document. Lynn’s globally unique identifier and any other descriptive information are used to identify the “image” of a document (this could include, for example, meta-data such as document title, author, date, or physical storage location of the paper-based document) ([0027], [0028], [0030], [0046] and [0047]), rather than a “format or layout information” of the document. In other words, Lynn only encodes document “images,” rather than any document “format or layout information” to be digitally/electronically interpretable/identified by the document processor as the invention. In particular, the computer readable bar code portion 304 of the identifier is provided for identifying document “images ([0046])” by a computer or the like, and the eye-legible information portion 302 (e.g., “KwikTag abc123/008/00367” in Fig. 3) of the identifier *is provided as a convenience for the user and provides basic*

information about a paper-based document or about how a give paper-based document is to be processed” as perceived by a human user ([0046]), but not any machine or processor.

Applicants contend that Lynn does not teach or disclose each and every feature of the present invention as disclosed in at least independent claims 10 and 20-22. As such, the present invention as now claimed is distinguishable and thereby allowable over the rejections raised in the Office Action. The withdrawal of the outstanding prior art rejections is in order, and is respectfully solicited.

Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and telephone number indicated below.

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